

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

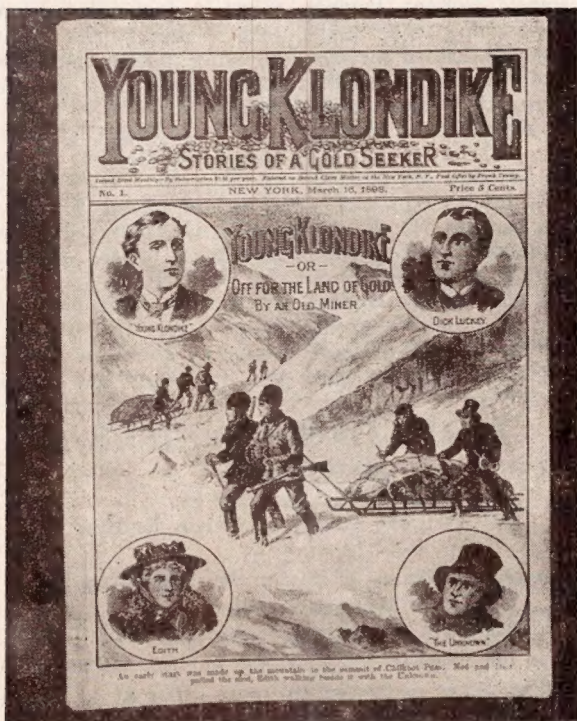
Vol. 22, No. 3

March 15, 1954

Whole No. 258

YOUNG KLONDIKE

By Charlie Duprez



From the Charlie Duprez Dime Novel picture collection

YOUNG KLONDIKE

By Charlie Duprez

When the big Yukon gold rush was on in the late 90's and thousands flocked there, what better subject could Tousey have picked for his five cent thrillers, with their brilliant colored covers to place before his juvenile readers than a hero who became infested with the hunt for gold. So came to life a new library, called Young Klondike. But what gets me is the fact that very scant mention was made of this library in the many years of the Roundup.

It was only through looking it up in Geo. Flaum's Index that one mention was made, and that only about six lines in the 1938 Birthday number. The name Young Klondike may have been mentioned, but never an article about it. Am really surprised that the late Harold Holmes, having the entire set, and doing many articles, passed it by. He loaned me the set for the usual purpose to photograph the covers, they sure were very good for novels published at that time.

Charlie Bragin however did not entirely overlook it, he brought out a very nice colored reprint, No. 1. Am I glad he did because it was a very interesting story. If interested I am sure Charlie can still supply copies.

Harold Holmes, his family that is, sold his collection to Caldwell of Lancaster, Pa., and when our brother

Caldwell passed on recently, Ralph Smith took over his collection. So Ralph, who knows how to write a good article really should do this one. Of course I read them as a boy, but like a lot of old timers did not have the foresight to save novels. No. 1 gives a very fine insight into what the stories were to be about, the main characters, two boys and a girl, ran throughout the entire set of 39 numbers. I should have said 4 characters because The Great Unknown made it three male principals, but he was no longer a lad. A detective who was searching the world over for his man, whom he never seemed to catch. In most every number he grabbed some individual as his man, but always had to apologize for his mistake. In fact his very earliest mistake in the stories is where Young Klondike enters, our hero was mistaken. That is a bit ahead of our story.

In New York City, two young men, named Nat Golden, (Young Klondike) and his chum Dick Luckey, very appropriate names for the tales, were employed at very low salaries. Both had read in the newspapers about the Gold Rush and when both were fired from their employment at the same time, Ned Golden induced his chum to start for the Yukon. With the little they had saved, and youth

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does not consider such a venture impossible, at least the youth as described by our dime novel authors, they left New York by train for Seattle, from whence on the steamer Sarah B. Hyde their adventures really started. No. 1 deals entirely with their adventures en route to the Klondike.

The female addition was introduced—Edith Welton who was saved by Young Klondike from a grave in the bounding Pacific. She was left aboard another ship by a deserting crew. From there on the four were in every story and on almost every cover. So not having the books themselves and giving you a faint outline will give you a few snap shots (mental) of the covers, with my usual snide remarks which for me are difficult to repress.

No. 1. A beautiful cover, showing the four pulling a sled with their possessions. Dressed like sure enough miners. Ned and Dick up front pulling the sled, Edith and the Unknown on each side of sled, giving moral support. Seems to me with hundreds of pounds to pull they would have done a bit on the motive power too. They are en route to the summit of Chilkoot Pass. In the distance going up hill is another sled with miners pulling their load. "Young Klondike, or off for the Land of Gold" is the title. The author is Francis W. Douglas but throughout the series the authorship is shown simply as "Author of Young Klondike".

The masthead on all covers, big type, YOUNG KLONDIKE. Under that "Stories of a Gold Seeker", sprinkled in between the latter, beautiful golden nuggets.

As in most all nickel novels a legend descriptive of the scene is at the bottom of each cover. "An early start was made up the mountain to the summit of Chilkoot Pass. Ned and Dick pulled the sled, Edith walking beside it with the Unknown".

On the four corners were pictures of our four main characters. Ned (Young Klondike) on upper left, Dick opposite, Edith lower left and right lower corner the Unknown. All thru

the series the Unknown wore that plug hat, maybe even took it to bed with him for fear of losing it. If such were the case he really had nothing to worry about, Tousey's artist could have given him another very easily.

No. 2. Young Klondike's Claim, or Nine Golden Nuggets. Wonder why only nine, they were usually always getting them by the cart load. The scene, a rough cabin, a table on which lay nine nuggets. Edith standing behind table, her cheese cake legs not showing, Dick on left pointing rifle at a bearded gent holding rifle, back to doorway which he had just entered. Ned stands between Dick and Edith and dramatically points finger at the intruder. Between Ned and intruder, the Unknown with club in hand. Title. As Jerry Tolman came through the door rifle in hand, all hands sprang up. "Aha ha! Nine golden nuggets eh" cried Jerry, "They are mine". "Get out of here Jerry Tolman", said Ned sternly. Dick leveled his rifle at the claim shark and the Unknown sprang forward with his club." Tolman was foiled. Curses.

No. 3. Young Klondike's First Million, or His Great Strike on Eldorado Creek. Dog gone that feller sure makes money fast. Only a short time before he was glad to get five bucks a week in New York. The scene. Usual Yukon scene, but here we find our four characters, with Young Klondike a few feet below a cliff, down in a hole, holding up for Edith to see a big pan filled to the brim with nuggets. Edith on her knees grasping at the treasure. Dick on the right with rifle. In the background looking towards the hills, the Unknown with rifle. The title, "But fortune favored Young Klondike now and no mistake, in a few moments the pan was filled to the brim with nuggets. Ned was handing it up out of the hole to Edith, when the Unknown looking off towards the hills suddenly shouted, "Who goes there?" I wonder did the voice answer, "Who goes where?"

No. 4. Young Klondike and the Claim Agents, or Fighting the Land

Sharks of Dawson City. The scene. A bar room. A table on which rested not nine nuggets but three piles of 'em, in front of each a stick upright bearing the numbers, 1, 2 and 3. Ned stands on a chair, one foot on the table, holding papers in his life hand, addressing a crowd of miners and a few Indians. On Ned's left stands Dick with gun in hand. On Ned's right, is the Unknown, plug hat as usual.

Well boys that's about the style of the covers that went through all the numbers, gold nuggets, gold dust,

villians as plentiful as the gold. In other higher numbers they shoot wal-ruses, go up in a balloon, and had other adventures that tax human intelligence. Well it would have been very tiresome reading if Doughty had stuck to ordinary events in life, so hats off to Doughty who knew how to keep his readers interested. To those who turned up their noses, or held 'em during this narrative I'm sure Newsy News and possibly some other article plus the ads will find things of real interest in this issue of Roundup.

OLD MELODRAMAS

By J. Edward Leithead

(continued from last issue)

Any play, the locale of which was New York, a name always magical and enhanced by O. Henry's wonderful short stories of "Bagdad on the Subway", had great drawing-power. And many were the melodramas that played it to the hilt: "Broadway After Dark," a famous one, but I don't know the playwright, "New York by Night", by Martin J. Dixon, "The Little Church Around the Corner", "Shadows of a Great City", "Fast Life in New York"—the list would be too long to name all, even if I knew them.

When our fellow member, Charles Duprez, learned I was doing an article on the old melodramas, he was much interested, as he and all his family were in show business. He wrote me two letters, giving me permission to quote from them:

"Mother and father played in stock for many years. Mother played a part in 'The Two Orphans', the blind girl. In those years they were very prominent, but never reached the heights of my brother Fred.

"Fred played not only leads, but character parts, both in stock and on the road. This was before he became prominent as a monologist, being a headliner in the Keith houses all over the U. S., also the Pantages Circuit. Was on the same bill at the Palace here in New York with Sophie Tucker and others. Finally caught on at the Palladium in London and was such a hit he settled there, coming over once a year to visit his kid brother. From vaudeville to musical comedies, where he starred. Wrote a number of plays, one he translated from a play my father wrote in German, called it, 'My Wife's Family', a comedy in four acts. They even made it into a movie which some years ago ran over here. Several of his comedies had three shows on the road in England. Added to this, Columbia, both here and abroad, had him make many comedy numbers. His life reads like a dime novel. HOB-BIES had his life in two issues, June and July, 1951.

"I was with him one season, playing a small bit in that old play, 'A Break for Liberty', founded on the infamous Biddle Brothers, who broke out of the Pittsburgh jail with the help of the warden's wife, who fell in love with one of the brothers. There were three shows under that name, and I think about four under the name, 'A Desperate Chance'. Fred played the part of Ed Biddle. The billboards always showed a winter scene, the fight in the snow where the brothers battled it out with the sheriff's posse. Seems they tried to rob an old grocer and killed him."

Some melodramas of the past, produced on a grand scale, ran for many seasons. There was "The Virginian" (from Owen Wister's famous book), starring Dustin Farnum, "The Squaw Man", starring William Faversham, "The Girl of the Golden West", starring Blanche Bates (the character of Jack Rance, the gambler-sheriff in the latter play, with his stovepipe hat, long-skirted coat and string tie, always reminded me of Jack Sinn, the gambler and desperado in the Diamond Dick tales by George C. Jenks).

Probably the biggest Western melodrama of them all was "The Round-Up", produced, I think, by Klaw and Erlanger, written by Murray and Miller, later novelized and published by Dillingham in a cloth-bound edition illustrated with scenes from the play. This much heralded melodrama, after a long run on Broadway, arrived in Philadelphia for the season of 1907-1908, as I recall, or maybe the season of 1909-1910.

Anyway, the Forrest Theatre, then at Broad and Sansom, was the only place large enough to house the great production, and I seem to remember that even then they had to enlarge the stage for Acts III and IV. It was breath-taking, that Third Act—"The Land of Dead Things". Real Apache Indians were brought from a reservation in Arizona to take part. The curtain rose on a dimly lighted stage, a spot in the desert with a high cliff at one side. It was dawn, and a click of hoofs sounded, and round a turn in the narrow cliff trail appeared a turbaned Apache on a spotted pony. Mounted Indian after mounted Indian followed, ghostlike, all disappearing in the wings at the right, high up.

The cattleman hero of the play, Jack Payson, has trailed Dick Lane, a prospector friend, into the desert. Both had loved the same girl, Echo Allen, daughter of a rancher, and Payson had married her during Lane's absence in Old Mexico, failing to deliver a letter sent him by Lane, saying he was alive and recuperating in a Sonora hospital after a set-to with a desperado named Buck McKee ("My mother was a Cherokee squaw, but I'm white in some spots") and some Apaches. The girl discovered that Lane was alive, that he wandered off again into the desert after learning of her marriage. She thought she wanted him brought back, to right a wrong, but actually her love was for Payson, the man she married. Quite a thrilling scene here, when Payson leaves the ranch-house to find Lane, rides back (you hear the hoofbeats beyond the closed door) as Echo calls out, fearing he may never return because Apaches are on the warpath and she realizes she wants him only; but at Payson's, "Did you call me, Echo?" she is forced to say no, for Dick Lane's brother, Bud, mixed up with McKee (played magnificently by Brinsley Shaw, I think, who afterward played the heavy in many "Bronco Billy" silent movies with G. M. Anderson) is concealed in the room, rises up with six-shooter in hand and threatens to kill Payson if he steps through the door.

Dick Lane dies in the desert from an Apache bullet after Payson finds him, the Indians attacking the two white men after dawn. There was a terrific scene between the thirst-crazed prospector and the cattleman, climaxed by the Apache attack and the rescue of Payson, alive and unhurt, by U. S. cavalrymen who were trailing the Indians. I'll never forget the battlesmoke and uproar of that Third Act.

The newspapers couldn't praise the play and the players enough, and more than once commented on a feat performed by one of the Apache actors. Creeping up the cliff trail, he was caught sight of by Dick Lane, below, got a bullet between the eyes and slid over the brink, hanging head downward with just a toe-hold on the rim of the cliff for the balance of the act. It was a marvelous exhibition of endurance.

Macklin Arbuckle (I'm not sure of the spelling of his given name, but he was a brother of Roscoe "Fatty" Arbuckle of later movie fame) got a hearty

laugh from audiences in his role of "Slim" Hoover, sheriff of Pinal County. A familiar line of his was, "Nobody loves a fat man". "The Round-Up" played to capacity houses from fall until spring, and seeing it was, to me, a wonderful experience that has never been dimmed by the passing years.

The End

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 120 Harold E. Farmer, 123 E. Elm St., Lansing 10, Mich. (change of addr.)
 200 Frank Gruber, 521 North Bristol Ave., W. Los Angeles, Calif. (New)
 201 Ralph Adimari, 39 No. 5th Ave., Mt. Vernon, N. Y. (old member)

NEWSY NEWS

By Ralph F. Cummings

Have just heard that Grossett & Dunlap brought out "The New Tom Swift Jr. Adventures," on Jan. 4th, 1954. They are being revived by Victor Appleton. The new series will have jetmarines for submarines, rocket ship for air ship, etc. Original Tom Swift series went out of print in 1941. (Antiquarian Bookman, 1-2-54).

James Wm. Martin of South San Francisco says he is all run down and expects to go into the hospital soon.

Eli Messier says his wife just lost her dear sister, and feels very bad over her loss—God bless her always.

I was up to see Ralph Smith at Lawrence, Mass., several weeks ago, and had a very nice afternoon with him, talking over old times and looking over his novels.

Was down to L. C. Skinners at Pawtucket, R. I. Feb. 10th and swapped stories with him, he sure has a very tough time of it, to get around. His left hand is useless, can't do a thing with it, and he says it's ice cold all the time. Tell you what, fellers, we don't appreciate it, when we are in good health, until something happens, we are all the same. Pard Skinner tells me that Frank Harris of Ashland, N. H., lost all his books and novels, and home in a fire Sept. 15th. Frank was a member of H. H. Bro. We all send our sympathy to you Frank. That was a terrible loss for any one to endure.

Some day I'm in hopes of making up a bibliography on old Dime Novels from 1860 or earlier up, so fellers, will you list me any unusual nove's

that you have in your collection. The number, title, author, when published or copyright date, size, amount of pages, other titles, etc. on back cover, if possible, and general makeup, as I'm sure there are lots of novels that I don't know anything about. I sure will appreciate all the help I can get, same applies to old story papers as well.

Fred Lee says in Pluck & Luck #39 the title of which is "Out With Buffalo Bill," etc., the word Bill is spelled with three L's. Quite an oddity.

Ernest Beique sends in — Jesse James Drops Job. (Worcester Evening Gazette, Feb. 4th 1954) (AP) Abilene, Texas. Jesse James quit his job here yesterday. He said a policeman's pay just wasn't enough.

John H. Foster wants a book with a story in it, with Enoch as the hero of the story. (He doesn't want Enoch Arden, as that's not the one.) Who can help him.

Frisco Bert Couch and wife are back from their trip. It must be wonderful when you can get out into the wide open spaces from Mexico down to the wilds of Guatemala. They were gone 3½ months. We all envy you, Bert.

Edward L. Kowalczyk, 73 Moore St., Worcester, Mass., fell 12 feet onto a cement floor last November, and broke his toes, and sprained his legs. He is just beginning to get out now, on crutches.

The next issue of the Dime Novel Roundup will contain an article by Frank Gruber entitled "The Horatio Alger Paperback First Editions".

QUESTION and ANSWER COLUMN

Mr. William Burns of Rockland, Maine, says in answer to Mr. Pitcher's question in the January issue relative to the authorship of Work and Win. "H. K. Shackelford started the series. Wrote the first 200 or more and possibly all of them."

There's an article in the Education department of Time magazine for August 24th 1953, sent in by Bill Gander, on page 34. Forever Bunter, has a little over one and a half columns of reading, and 3 pictures of Billy Bunter that are very interesting, such as "Billy Facing the Headmaster", "In Corridor Collision" and "Spiflicated by Schoolmate".

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(Advertisements)

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For Sale—Cloth books, Optic, Ellis, Castleman, Alger, etc. Old Outlaws, Westerns, Detective Dime Novels 15¢ up. Youths Companions, 10¢. U. S. Stamps, Old envelopes, song sheets, postcards. Kenneth Daggett, 169 West St., Gardiner, Maine.

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Wanted — Ralph Rollingtons Old Boys Books. William H. Gander, Box 60, Transcona, Manitoba, Canada.

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5. Frank Reade, Jr.'s "Warrior".
6. Young Wild West, the Prince of the Saddle & F. Reade Jr.'s Warrior.
7. Frank Reade Jr. and Young Wild West.
8. Young Wild West and Frank Reade.
9. Frank Reade Jr. and Young Wild West.
10. Frank Reade III and his Steam Motorcycle and Frank Reade Jr.'s Warrior
11. Frank Reade III, Young Wild West and Frank Reade Jr.'s "Warrior"
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Ralph F. Cummings

Fisherville, Mass.